Lovely Strange Dark

ULTRABAROQUE DEPROGRAMMER

BY ITOU SEIKOU & ASADA TORAO

CHAPTER 32

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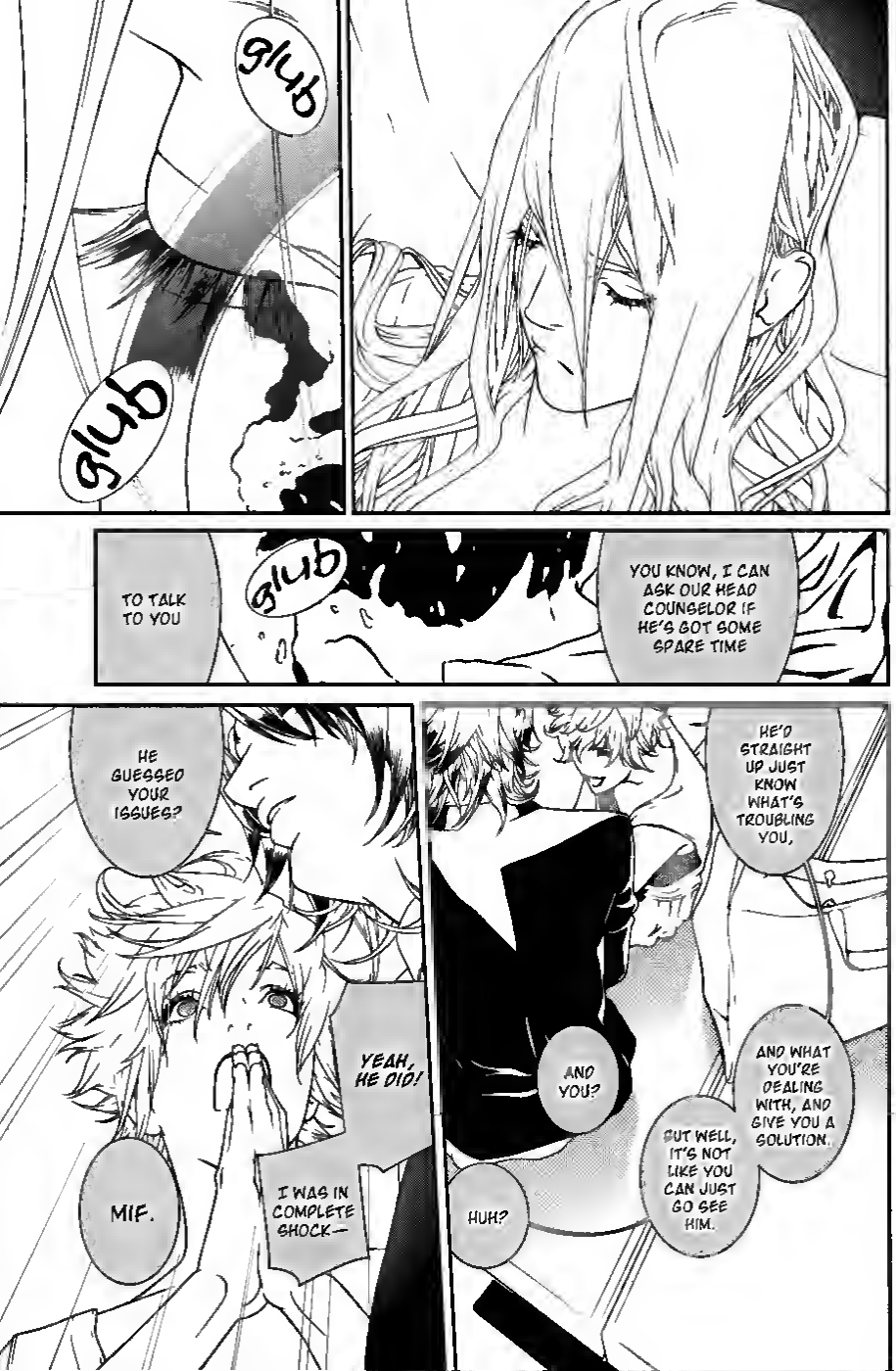
lovelystrangedark.wordpress.com

tap
HURRY HURRY HURRY!
tap
tap
GAAA AHHH!
Whoa

CHAPTER 32 COIN LAUNDRY ❷

I'll grab Mif and get back.
Fwoom
It'll be fine. If I can do this long distance, I must've depro-grammed oodles of people.
I can do it by myself.
FORGET ABOUT MOVING MY BODY. IT TAKES ALL MY EFFORT JUST TO BLINK.
IT'S LIKE I'VE BEEN ENGULFED IN TRANSPARENT CONCRETE...
IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, I'LL HAVE TO RELY ON SORACHAI'S QUICK THINKING

I'M PRETTY SURE THAT HE AND MIF ARE BOTH HYPNOTIZED.
YOUR MOM SET UP ANOTHER CONNECTION SO WE CAN KEEP AN EYE ON HOW MIF'S DOING.
ANYWAY,
I DUNNO.
IT'S WHAT I HEARD FROM SORACHAI.
HE SAID NOT TO TALK TO HIM OR TOUCH HIM.
JUST LOOK AT HIM. WHAT PART OF THAT SAYS HE'S DIVING?
LET'S WAIT AND WATCH FOR A BIT


glub
glub
TO TALK TO YOU
glub
YOU KNOW, I CAN ASK OUR HEAD COUNSELOR IF HE'S GOT SOME SPARE TIME
HE GUESSED YOUR ISSUES?
YEAH, HE DID!
MIF.
I WAS IN COMPLETE SHOCK—
HE'D STRAIGHT UP JUST KNOW WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU,
AND YOU?
AND WHAT YOU'RE DEALING WITH, AND GIVE YOU A SOLUTION.
HUH?
BUT WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN JUST GO SEE HIM.

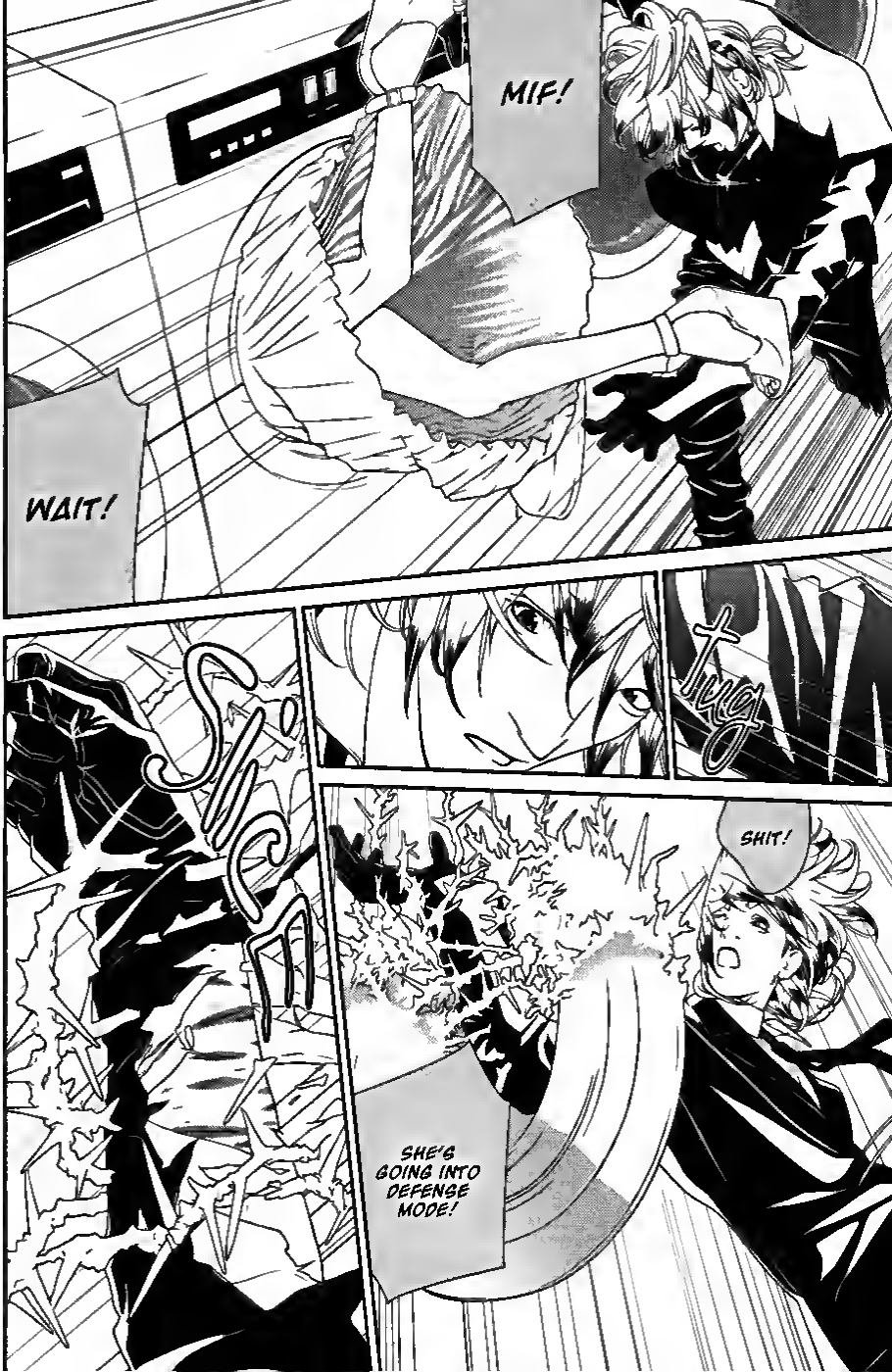
HE LOOKED INTO YOU BEFORE YOU MET.
THE PEOPLE WHO RECRUITED YOU KNEW ALL ABOUT YOU BEFOREHAND.
THEN HE SAYS SOMETHING LIKE IT'S DESTINY, OR GOD'S WILL OR SOME HIGHER POWER, THAT BROUGHT THE TWO OF YOU TOGETHER
THE GUY WHO RECRUITED YOU AND ALL THE PEOPLE YOU MET AT THE SEMINARS, I BET THEY WERE NICE TO YOU, RIGHT?
WHEN YOU HEAR THAT, IT GIVES YOU THE IDEA THAT ALL YOUR CHOICES IN LIFE LED TO THAT MOMENT
THEY GIVE YOU MORE ENCOURAGEMENT AND AFFECTION THAN YOU'D GET IN YOUR NORMAL LIFE. AND THAT'S ALL IT TAKES TO WIN YOUR DEVOTION.
?
Did I ever tell him my name?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO DO IT, AS WELL.
YOU WIND UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS ACT OF HIS, WHERE IT SEEMS LIKE HE CAN SEE INTO YOUR HEART,
TO ALL YOUR WORRIES AND TROUBLES.

AND ANY FLICKER OF UNEASE OR DOUBT THAT HE AND HIS TEACHINGS EVOKE IN YOU
THAT'S THE SIMPLE APPROACH THAT PSYCHIC WORK USES
IS PUT OUT
YOU GET FILLED WITH A STRANGE EUPHORIA,
tear
BY THE TIME YOU REALIZE THAT IT'S PW, YOU'VE ALREADY BECOME PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY UNABLE TO BREAK AWAY.
THEY JUST CHANGED THE TRAPPINGS TO MAKE IT APPEALING TO YOUNG LADIES. THE CONTENT'S THE SAME. MIF...
grip
thud
PW? THIS ISN'T THEM.
PW IS FAMOUS FOR THOSE SELF-DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS, RIGHT? THE ONES THAT STARRY-EYED ENTREPRE-NEURS FLOCK TO
MY SEMINARS ARE LOW KEY AND FLOWING WITH ZEN
beep beep

WHY NOT DROP BY MY PLACE?
IF YOU'RE SO ADAMANT ABOUT IT, HOW ABOUT YOU SEE FIRSTHAND
WHAT THE PLACE IS LIKE?
Smile

It's like he can tell what I'm going to do...!
YOU BASICALLY WIND UP FORCED INTO BEING AN UNPAID PROSTITUTE FOR DW.
WHEN RECRUITING A GUY, SLEEP WITH HIM IF NEED BE TO GET HIM TO JOIN.
...What's with this guy?
MIF,
ALL FEMALE MEMBERS ARE TRAINED TO DO THAT.

DOES ANYONE EVER TELL YOU YOU'RE A WEIRDO?
I'M NOT GOING TO SLEEP WITH YOU, MIF.
BESIDES, YOUR BROTHER WOULD KILL ME.
...YEAH, SOUNDS LIKE HIM
I WON'T GET TRICKED BY MY BROTHER.
SO THAT'S HOW YOU KNEW MY NAME.
MIF?
HAHA, YOU LET THAT SLIP
ANYWAY, YOU'RE JUST SOME SHITTY THERAPIST OR WHATEVER.
...LEAVE ME ALONE.


MIF!
WAIT!
tug
SHIT!
SHE'S GOING INTO DEFENSE MODE!

SLASH
swish
MIFI

DEFENDERS SHOW UP TO ELIMINATE THE INTRUDER. IN OTHER WORDS, ME
flop
...OWWWW WHAT WAS THAT...?
COME AND GET ME!

What? What the hell? He fell from all the way up there and he's fine...?
No no no—
WHERE THE HELL DID THAT LEAD TO!?
MIF!
Eeek!
This is terrifying.
LISTEN TO ME! THIS ISN'T THE REAL WORLD!
THIS IS YOUR MIND-SCAPE!
.....
A second ago some guy was lecturing me on how bad the seminars are!
...WHAT THE?
AN AQUARIUM ...?
How'd I get here...?
LOOK UP THERE! THE WHALE'S MOUTH!

Aaa
I CAME HERE TO HELP YOU!
Aaa
YOU WERE SO SURE YOU COULDN'T BE HYPNOTIZED, BUT YOU ARE YOU'RE INSIDE THIS WORLD IN YOUR MIND.
Aaa
YOUR MEMORIES ARE BEING REORGANIZED TO FILL IT.
I'LL GET YOU OUT OF THIS MAZE. TAKE YOU HOME.
THAT'S WHY I'M HERE
QUIT JOKING AROUND!
YOU'RE SAYING I'M HYPNOTIZED? THIS ISN'T REAL ?
THERE'S NO POINT STANDING HERE TRYING TO CONVINCE YOU LET ME TELL YOU HOW THIS GOES

SHIT! YOU CAN'T THROW THESE THINGS AT PEOPLE!
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPEN-ING!!
NO NO NO!!
!!
AND FREE YOU FROM THE PROGRAM PW'S GOT YOU WRAPPED UP IN.
I'M GOING TO SIMULTA-NEOUSLY TAKE OUT THE DEFENDERS THAT WERE ACTIVATED WHEN I CRITI-CIZED PW
THAT'S MY AREA OF EXPERTISE.
I'M WHAT YOU'D CALL A DEPRO-GRAMMER—

AA AH HH HH HH!
MIF!
THESE CLOWNS ARE A DEFENSE PROGRAM EMBEDDED INSIDE YOUR MIND
THEY CAN'T HARM YOU JUST ME, THE INTRUDER DON'T WORRY, I'M NOT GOING TO DIE
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT THEM
You know, this hurts worse than in real life...
Is it always like this?
This is one helluva harsh job, huh.
Is this my punishment for never telling Calavera thanks?

It's not real.
Well, regardless, it's not like this'll kill me.
.....
...STOP.
SWOOP
STOP IT!
Sigh

...I won't die...
Ch!
...I... can't...